

# The God Spot

## What really matters?



Have you ever had an experience which has changed your perspective on life? I was astonished to see the video of the passengers on the plane which crash landed in Dubai loitering over their hand luggage while the air crew shouted at them to jump off. The explosion of the aircraft so soon after may now have persuaded them to live differently in that respect, and perhaps even to change their life values as they realise how close they were to disaster.

### *Putting health first?*

I've often heard it said, "As long as you're healthy, nothing else matters". As I write this, the Olympic ceremony has not even happened, but we have been told that the football legend Pele won't be lighting the torch. He is reported as saying, "I'm not in physical condition to take part in the opening ceremony... Only God is more important than my health." I was interested to read that. And that he doesn't miss an opportunity to talk about his faith. Apparently he'll talk about how his talent was God-given, how God's hand was in play on the pitch, and even how his nickname was a gift from God. But



I was disappointed when I read up about his personal life.

### *Footballer with feet of clay?*

For all his accolades as a footballer, and his donation of an autographed football-shirt to the Pope, Pele's personal life is not the best commendation of Christian faith. His first marriage lasted 16 years, toward the end of which he started a relationship with a 17-year-old model. Twelve years later he married again, this marriage lasting 14 years. His most recent marriage was at the age of 73. Those relationships may sound comparatively long term, but he has had a number of children both within and outside those marriages.

### *Lived out Faith*

Where do you expect me to go from here? Yes, I am disappointed that Pele's life doesn't seem to match up to his mouth. But then, for which of us does it? My life certainly couldn't bear close scrutiny, although I really do want to live in a way which honours God. The bottom line is that all of us are what the Bible calls 'sinners'. So what really matters to me is that through Jesus, I am forgiven. And, by God's grace, given strength to live for him.

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